

GOVERNANCE, RULE OF LAW, AND SECURITY

Background Information

To achieve long-term stability and economic growth, Haiti needs strong governmental institutions that deliver quality public services to citizens, are transparent and accountable, administer justice efficiently and in conformity with the Haitian Constitution, provide security to the Haitian people and protect the most vulnerable. The U.S. Government is committed to supporting a responsive, just, and effective government in Haiti that can promote economic and democratic development. While Haiti's growing democratic foundation is reason for optimism when compared with its authoritarian past, chronically weak institutions and instances of political deadlock present significant challenges to governance and rule of law. Compounding this was the 2010 earthquake, which killed an estimated 18 percent of Haiti's civil service and destroyed much of the government's physical infrastructure, including the National Palace, police headquarters, many courts, and all but one of 29 government ministry buildings. These complex challenges hinder key legislative and policy reforms and slow development efforts.



Capacity Development for the Government of Haiti

The U.S. Government, through the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID), is helping the Government of Haiti to strengthen national and local governance institutions and establish credible political and electoral processes. Current activities include:

- **Promoting transparency and government accountability** through the redeployment and extension of an Integrated Financial Management System (IFMS), which provides automated financial functions, enhanced control of revenues and expenditures, and facilitation of investigations. Supported by USAID, this system is currently being used in 48 Haitian Government offices, is the backbone of the Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) network infrastructure, and is the major communications and data exchange channel to other GOH ministry applications. Technical, logistical, and managerial strengthening support to the MEF for the restoration, operation, and expansion of both the IFMS-related network infrastructure and the financial management systems will continue through 2017.
- **Supporting decentralization** by building the capacity of targeted municipal governments to help them more effectively and transparently plan, collect, and manage revenues; deliver basic services; coordinate emergency relief efforts; and provide services for displaced Haitians. In 2012, USAID worked with a local firm to develop CIVITAX, a software designed that enables municipalities to increase their tax revenues and manage their annual budgets, as well as facilitate connectivity between central government agencies. CIVITAX helped the municipality of Carrefour increase its fiscal budget by almost 300%, and, based on this success, USAID has recently installed CIVITAX in three additional communes. In October 2014, at the request of the Ministry of Interior, USAID handed over the rights to CIVITAX to the Haitian government, which has stated a goal of installing the software in all 140 municipalities in Haiti.

- **Supporting a credible election process.** USAID's support for overdue parliamentary and local elections aims to build the capacity of the Haitian electoral authorities to conduct credible, inclusive, and legitimate elections; help non-partisan election observers to deter and detect incidents of electoral fraud and violence; and assist Haitian civil society organizations and political parties to increase women's participation as voters, candidates, and poll workers.

Improving Access to Justice and Legal Assistance

The rule of law, as carried out by justice and security institutions, is a basic foundation of human rights and individual liberties, citizen security, and economic growth. To advance the rule of law in Haiti, USAID and the U.S. Department of State are:

- **Addressing pretrial detention** through the provision of equipment, technical assistance, and improved case management in targeted jurisdictions. In October 2014, USAID deployed Haiti's first computerized case management information system in Saint-Marc, which will dramatically improve the ability to track cases and reduce delays.
- **Supplying technical assistance to operationalize the Superior Judicial Council.** USAID strongly supported a major step that Haiti took in 2012 to advance judicial reform: the establishment of Haiti's Superior Judicial Council, a new body that will provide independent oversight of the judiciary. The U.S. Government is providing technical support to the Council, including to the Judicial Inspection Unit, which will conduct the vetting and certification of 1,000 judges. USAID provided financial and logistical support for the drafting of the first Superior Judicial Council work plan and its internal rules of procedure.
- **Providing free legal assistance** to underserved residents of the Cité Soleil and Martissant neighborhoods in Port-au-Prince, Saint-Marc, Croix des Bouquets, Cap-Haïtien, and Fort Liberte. Since October 2011, USAID has provided legal assistance to nearly 15,000 individuals. The assistance helped beneficiaries to get access to justice, while at the same time decreasing pressure on Haiti's overwhelmed judicial system.
- **Reconstructing and archiving 32,000 case files** at the Port-au-Prince Prosecutor's Office and Court of First Instance that were damaged or destroyed in the earthquake. USAID has continued to work on the filing, coding, and archiving of current and closed cases, and training judicial personnel to manage case files and evidence.
- **Supporting the Criminal Code Reform Commission** through a consultative process to complete revisions to Haiti's outdated penal and criminal procedure codes and build support for their legislative passage. The current codes have not been updated since 1835.
- **Renovating and constructing corrections facilities** to rehabilitate prison infrastructure that was severely damaged by the earthquake and to provide additional facilities to alleviate severe overcrowding and improve overall conditions.
- **Providing cross-training to groups of police, justice, and other officials** on sexual and gender-based violence, counter-trafficking in persons, crime scene management, counter-narcotics, and other critical subjects that will improve security, human rights, and women's participation.

Strengthening the Security Sector

The Haitian National Police (HNP) is Haiti's sole indigenous security force. Improving the HNP's capacity and expanding its ranks are critical to the Government of Haiti's ability to maintain public order and protect vulnerable populations. Success in this area is essential to the eventual completion of the U.N. Stabilization Mission in Haiti (MINUSTAH). In support of these goals, the U.S. Government is:

- **Supporting the recruitment and training of new officers** by providing equipment, uniforms, food, and other essential supplies for cadets, as well as providing additional infrastructure to augment the campus' capacity, including building additional classrooms, a new kitchen, additional toilet blocks, and upgraded electrical infrastructure. As of December 2014, some 3,300 new police officers have been trained and commissioned supporting the Government of Haiti's goal to increase force size to 15,000 officers in 2016.
- **Bolstering the Haitian National Police counter-narcotics unit, *La Brigade de Lutte contre le Trafic de Stupéfiants* (BLTS),** so that authorities can counter the damaging influence of narcotics trafficking. Efforts include training specially vetted police, furnishing K-9s, providing vehicles, and renovating the BLTS facilities.

Over three years, the force has expanded nearly six-fold from 37 officers to more than 200. More than 70 of these officers have received advanced tactical training through an agreement with the Miami Dade Police Department. With U.S. Government assistance, the BLTS seized more drugs in 2012 than in any of the five previous years, and made significant seizures in 2014 (to include 9,105 pounds of marijuana seizures).

- **Facilitating in-service learning** through deployment of Haitian-American New York City Police Department (NYPD) officers who supported the judicial police with training in investigative techniques, provided training to anti-kidnapping personnel, and helped the HNP set up a community policing unit in the central Delmas neighborhood of Port-au-Prince. Additionally, in 2012 and 2013, the U.S. Government funded specialized trainings for more than 150 HNP officers in Colombia, Brazil, and the United States.
- **Providing infrastructure and communications support** to the HNP by upgrading the police's radio capacity and constructing new police stations in areas ranging from the violence-prone neighborhoods of Cité Soleil and Grand Ravine in Port-au-Prince to the new northern industrial park at Caracol.
- **Improving the capacity of the Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Economy and Finance, the *Bureau des Affaires Financieres et Economique*, and banks** by providing technical assistance and training in how to detect and counter money laundering.
- **Helping the HNP build their capacity** by providing special technical advisors to the offices of the Director General, Inspector General, Prison Administration, Women's Affairs, and Coast Guard.

The U.S. Government also supports the efforts of MINUSTAH to promote a secure and stable environment in Haiti. The U.S. funds the American contingent of up to 100 UN police officers, ten corrections officers, and six military officers that are seconded to MINUSTAH.

Protecting Human Rights and Vulnerable Populations

Promoting respect for human rights and the protection of vulnerable populations is a key U.S. priority in Haiti. The United States funds a number of initiatives to improve physical security, provide services to victims of abuse, collect and analyze data, build institutional capacity, and empower vulnerable populations, including:

- **Providing specialized training for select female police officers** who work with the police special victims' unit. Ten specially selected female HNP officers received 11 months of basic police training in Colombia, along with specialized training on sexual and gender-based violence, and graduated from the program in December 2013.
- **Improving the capacity of the Government of Haiti and non-governmental organizations** to identify and provide treatment to survivors of violence and human trafficking, including medical, rehabilitation, psychosocial, and legal services.
- **Supporting economic opportunities for women**, including survivors of sexual violence, through programs in microcredit, short-term jobs programs, and leadership training.
- **Protecting the rights of prisoners** by reducing pretrial detention and supporting health services that address prisoners at risk of or suffering from tuberculosis, cholera, and HIV/AIDS.